Mr. Stephen J. Pollak
Assistant Attorney General

June 13, 1968

Director, FBI

ASSASSINATION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

This is to confirm information furnished to you by SA [redacted] on June 12, 1968, and also to furnish you additional information subsequently received in this matter. The information set forth herein is based on preliminary communications and complete details will be incorporated in reports setting forth results of investigation.

The following information was furnished to you by Mr. Long on June 12, 1968:

When the subject James Earl Ray was arrested on June 8, 1968, by New Scotland Yard in London, England, the following items were found in his possession:

A .38 caliber "Liberty Chief" revolver of Japanese make; a Polaroid 220 camera; an RCA transistor radio; a light tan raincoat believed purchased on May 6, 1968, in West Toronto, Canada; a brown wool suit with a label bearing the name "Eric Galt" and the date "July 21, 1967"; a blue oxford cloth shirt of Canadian manufacture and bearing a laundry mark; a sport jacket and trousers; a receipt dated May 2, 1968, for $345 on an invoice from the Kennedy Travel Bureau, West Toronto, Canada, for R. Sneyd, 962 Dundas Street, West Toronto, and passport photographs of the subject from the Arcade Photo Studio dated April 11, 1968.

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He also possessed a mimeographed booklet entitled "How to Hypnotize" by Dr. Adolph F. Lonk, Lonk Institute of Hypnotism, Palatine, Illinois; a paper match book from the New Gorevale Restaurant, West Toronto; a can of spray deodorant bearing English and French label from Steinbergs; birth certificate and receipt for certificate issued April 24, 1968, to "Sneyd, Ramon George, DOB October 8, 1932," International Certificate of Vaccination issued by Canadian Department of National Health and Welfare, April 29, 1968, bearing name A. Y. Boyd, M.D., Toronto Health Officer, and a wallet with 60 pounds in five pound notes.

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NOTE: See Rosen to DeLoach memorandum dated June 13, 1968, entitled, "MURKIN."

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Appropriate investigation is being conducted relative to various items set forth above.

[redacted] also advised you of efforts being conducted to trace the binoculars recovered with other items near the scene of the shooting of Martin Luther King, Jr. Mr. Cordra York, Sr., of the York Arms Company, Memphis, Tennessee, advised that a review of his records located an invoice dated October 31, 1967, wherein the York Arms Company received from D. P. Bushnell and Company, Incorporated, Pasadena, California, a shipment of 7 x 35 Banner binoculars. Mr. York stated this order was placed on October 20, 1967, for six pairs of binoculars to be placed in snap top cases. The binoculars were shipped on October 30, 1967, according to the invoice; and the billing date was listed as October 31, 1967.

Mr. York said he received other 7 x 35 Banner binoculars in January, 1968, and April, 1968, but these were wide angle binoculars and retailed for a higher price. He also said that if salesman Ralph Carpenter had to go to the window showcase to remove the pair of binoculars, they were in all probability the last pair in stock. He said they reorder periodically from D. P. Bushnell and Company, Incorporated, as the supply diminishes. Mr. York said there is no record kept by his firm or received from the Bushnell Company identifying the binoculars by serial number. A review of the York Arms Company's records fails to indicate a subsequent invoice showing purchases of 7 x 35 Banner binoculars in snap top cases since the invoice dated October 31, 1967. A review of the stock on hand did show one pair of the 7 x 35 binoculars which retailed at a price of $39.95. According to Mr. York these binoculars were identical to those sold by salesman Ralph Carpenter in this matter even though they were in a zipper type case rather than the snap top case. Mr. York said most of his customers purchasing binoculars preferred the snap top case and he has exchanged cases to satisfy customers. He is of the opinion this might have happened in this instance.

As [redacted] previously advised you, an individual using the name of R. W. Trotter telephoned the Pentagon in Washington, D. C., on June 7, 1968, and claimed he was the killer of Martin Luther King, Jr., and knew the girl in the polka dot dress who was at the scene of the shooting of Senator Kennedy in Los Angeles. Trotter denied making the telephone call and denied having any information concerning the murder of Dr. King or Senator Kennedy. He has a general reputation in Cunningham, Tennessee, his place of residence, of being unreliable, untrustworthy [redacted]

[redacted] also furnished you information regarding the individual referred to in Toronto newspapers as the "fat man" who reportedly delivered an envelope to the subject while Ray was living at 962 Dundas Avenue, West Toronto. The Metropolitan Toronto Police Department advised that the "fat man" accompanied by his wife, contacted that agency and identified himself as Robert McDouldton of Toronto who has been employed as a salesman for a paint supply company for the past eight years and who worked in the Dundas Avenue area.

Mr. McDouldton explained that in early May of this year, he had used a public telephone booth in the vicinity of 962 Dundas Avenue and found an envelope there addressed to Sneyd at the Dundas Avenue address. He thereafter took the envelope to that address and gave it to Sneyd in the presence of Sneyd's landlady. He stated the envelope contained a Toronto postmark with no return address and he had the impression it contained some kind of application for a job.

The landlady viewed McDouldton and identified him as the "fat man" to whom she had previously referred. Appropriate Canadian authorities are satisfied that McDouldton is a reputable citizen and that he has no knowledge of nor is he involved with the subject. These authorities advised they are committed not to divulge McDouldton's identity and requested that this commitment be honored and no information be released even acknowledging that the mysterious "fat man" has been located.

In addition to the foregoing information furnished by [redacted] SA [redacted] telephonically advised you on the evening of June 12, 1968, that Charles Q. Stephens, [redacted] who was a witness in the rooming house in Memphis when the shooting occurred, had been located in Memphis, Tennessee, by FBI Agents. A Department Attorney on the scene was in the process of arranging to interview Stephens and is to obtain an appropriate affidavit.

In accordance with your request of SA [redacted] on June 12, 1968, copies of the registration card from the New Rebel Motor Hotel signed by Eric S. Galt have been expeditiously forwarded to Memphis to be furnished to Department Attorney J. Harold Flannery in connection with the obtaining of certain affidavits.

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The following additional developments are being furnished for your information.

The .38 caliber revolver Ray had in his possession at the time of his apprehension in London was sold to Robert Tatum, a gun dealer, of Mableton, Georgia, on October 11, 1966, by the Liberty Arms Company and Solinger Cutlery Company, Montrose, California. Mr. Tatum has advised that on December 3, 1966, he sold the gun for $50 to Walter E. Spain of Birmingham, Alabama.

Walter E. Spain has confirmed he purchased the weapon from a gun dealer located just outside of Atlanta, Georgia, after seeing an advertisement in an Atlanta paper. Sometime in the spring of 1967 he gave the revolver to his father, Walter Leon Spain, in partial payment of a debt. Walter Leon Spain has advised that because of financial difficulties following his being hospitalized in August, 1967, he began selling personal items among which was the revolver he obtained from his son. The items were sold by placing advertisements in Sunday editions of the "Birmingham News." On the Sunday his advertisement appeared regarding the revolver, he received a call from a man who was interested in the gun and subsequently sold the weapon to that man for $65. The purchaser paid for the weapon with two $20 bills, two $10 bills, and a $5 bill. Walter Leon Spain did not give the buyer any receipt nor did he obtain from the buyer any information as to his identification, residence, or employment. Mr. Spain furnished neither ammunition nor papers for the gun.

Mr. Spain could recall only that the buyer was driving a late model white or light-colored automobile, but could furnish no further description. He described the buyer as a white male about 40 to 45 years of age, 5 feet 8 inches or 5 feet 9 inches tall, weighing 170 to 175 pounds, having dark hair slightly graying at temples. Mr. Spain selected a photograph of Ray which was taken in California in January or February of 1968 as "resembling the man" who bought the weapon, but could not make a positive identification of Ray as the purchaser.

It has been determined that an advertisement for the .38 caliber revolver placed by Mr. Spain appeared in the October 1, 1967, issue of the "Birmingham News."

Pollak

Information was previously received that Ralph M. Carpenter, the York Arms Company employee who sold the binoculars to the subject, is presently confined to a mental institution. Dr. Max West, the physician in attendance on the floor of the Tennessee Psychiatric Institution and Hospital, Memphis, Tennessee, where Mr. Carpenter is a patient, has stated that in his opinion Mr. Carpenter is competent when he is not involved in his current disorder described as [redacted] Dr. West has advised that in his opinion Mr. Carpenter's present condition should have no bearing on his previous identification, or information furnished relative to this case although a defense attorney might try to make something out of it.

With respect to inquiries in Portugal, it has been learned that Ray was in Lisbon May 8 - 17, 1968, where he stayed in the Hotel Portugal. He reportedly consorted with local women and occasionally visited various Lisbon bars. One prostitute was located who spent one night with Ray but she could furnish no pertinent information. Ray returned to London on May 17, 1968, as established by airline records and official records of the Portugese and British Governments.

Ray is presently being held in Wandsworth Prison under unprecedented security provisions. He had been held in Brixton Prison but was transferred by heavily guarded convoy to Wandsworth Prison which is more secure on June 11, 1968.

Scotland Yard is continuing extensive investigation to develop information on his activities in London but has not yet been able to determine Ray's whereabouts in London prior to May 28, 1968, when he took a room at the New Earls Court Hotel. On June 5, 1968, he moved to the Pax Hotel where he stayed until the date of his arrest on June 8, 1968. The receptionist at the New Earls Court Hotel stated Ray was very shy and although she indicated a willingness to establish a close relationship with him, he did not seem receptive.

Among Ray's effects at the time of his arrest was a four page memorandum or article setting out a detailed description of the theory and specifications regarding silencers for firearms.

You will be kept advised of pertinent developments.